The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives accurate and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1651 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 48

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

One of Nature's seven wondrous miracles—if not the first—is the sudden patriotism of American Communists.

Now we don't believe in miracles—not in this day and age—so we've been delving into the subject and interviewing some of our friends who are Communists in fact, if not in name. There are very few Communists who will admit to their persuasion. That is one of the characteristics of the breed.

These Communists to whom we have talked are more fervently war-conscious, more eager to suffer and sacrifice for victory, than the average American citizen is today. In fact, their bloodthirsty demand is for the immediate opening of a "Western Front"—not a second front any more, mind you—regardless of the cost in lives and in blood.

But what is their interest in victory? What, in their opinion, are we fighting for? We asked these questions and the answer we received was "the utter destruction of Fascism."

Now we agree fully as to the desirability and necessity of wiping out Fascism. But we also want just as strongly a victory for the kind of democracy which we regard as Americanism. That is where we and the Communists part company.

Who Is Reactionary?

The Communists—let's call them Commies for short—don't believe in Americanism any more than Hitler does. They regard Americanism as a "reactionary" word. They regard American democracy as a "reactionary" form of government. In fact, the only form of Government which seems to suit their peculiar fancies is that prevailing in Soviet Russia.

Now we're sick and tired of being called reactionaries by the Commies. They haven't preempted that word. They can't make it their exclusive epithet. In fact, it is our considered opinion that the worst reactionaries in the world are the Commies themselves.

And this is why. The Commies do not believe in progress once they've established their own regime. They consider Communism the "be all and end all" of progress. For that reason they are reactionaries. No human being—even a Commy—knows all the answers. Even if we were to admit the Commy claims that a communist regime offers greater advantages to the masses of the people than they now enjoy under any other form of Government—and we don't believe it for the moment—still that does not preclude the possibility of a better form of Government being devised in the future. But would the Commies tolerate that? The example of Soviet Russia, where any and all opposition to the regime in power has been brutally suppressed, fully answers that question.

So our conclusion must be that the Commies are "progressive" only when they lack power but become just as reactionary as Fascists once they gain power. If that is progressivism, if that is liberalism, they can keep it to themselves exclusively.

Who Are the Patriots?

The same intellectual hypocrisy is apparent in the sudden patriotism of the Commies. We discover that those who were loudest in condemnation of this war before Hitler moved in on Russia are now most vociferous in demanding all-out support for the war. The very ones who joined with the isolationists in calling this "an imperialistic war" are now yelling for the defeat of the "Fascist aggressors."

The question therefore occurs as to whether these Commy patriots are patriots to the country in name only but fellowship or to Soviet Russia?

We could give a categorical answer to that question but for the time being we will content ourselves with remaining quite skeptical about the motives and principles of the Communists.

We will also watch very carefully the developments of their "party line" and of their continued attempts to "bore from within" the labor movement while waving the flag and singing patriotic hymns.

We advise all members of the American Federation of Labor to do likewise for their own protection.

Soviet Russia is the gallant ally of the United States in this war. The Russian army and the Russian people are fighting courageously and bitterly against our common foe. We have every admiration for their valor and for their homeland. We have every respect for their right to any form of Government that suits them best.

But we will resist in any and all efforts by Communists in this country to sneer at or overthrow our own American democracy by word or deed.

Nelson Hails "Magnificent" Record Set By Labor Since Pearl Harbor

Washington, D. C.—Organized labor was saluted by the War Production Board for having performed one of the most amazing jobs in the nation's history during the year since Pearl Harbor.

In commemoration of the first anniversary of the Japanese attack on Hawaii, the board, over the signature of Chairman Donald M. Nelson, published a review of American labor's participation in the war effort, in which it paid tribute to trade unions for having "hung up some of the most impressive production records in the history of free labor."

"Organized working men in the United States in a single year have given a powerful answer to the Axis assault on freedom throughout the world," the board's report declared.

"That answer, a thunderous 400 per cent increase in industrial production, is being heard today in the ports and deserts of Africa and in the waters of the Pacific—on every front in this global war."

As examples of how the workers have answered the Axis attack, the W.P.B. cited the construction of 650 sea-going vessels since Pearl Harbor, compared to 106 for all of 1941, and also a 350 per cent rise in output of merchant ships. Since the attack on Pearl Harbor; a six-fold increase in tanks and guns, and similar gains all along the line.

"Behind that output have been ideas that streamlined production methods as the brainpower of United States labor, enlisted into the fight through 1,750 labor-management committees, turned plant wheels at new war speeds," the board pointed out.

"Labor stayed on the job throughout the year, showing the value of union no-strike pledges by cutting the rate of work stoppages to an average of one day lost in 16 years."

Workers were also praised warmly for having matched their production records by "taking the lead in every type of war activity on the home front," the report added.

It cited the fact that unions purchased millions of dollars in war bonds; initiated scrap collection drives; instituted rubber conservation programs; raised special funds for purchase of planes, tanks and submarines; inaugurated war relief drives; established "blood banks" and aided in many other ways.

"But no American worker thinks his job is done," the report stressed. "Today across the nation unions raise their production goals and the task of war workers goes on at full speed, not to slacken until the job is done."

Remember Pearl Harbor!

Washington, D. C.—America's fighting forces and America's production soldiers will mark the close of the first year of our participation in this war with a significant "Labor For Victory" broadcast on Dec. 6.

On this program, AFL President William Green will chart labor's victory plans for the coming year of the war which, we all hope, will be the victory year.

At the same time Army and Navy representatives will discuss what our armed forces hope to accomplish on the battlefronts during the months to come. The latter broadcast will be presented by Lieut. Gen. J. T. McNarney, Deputy Chief of Staff of the U. S. Army, and by Rear Admiral E. W. Mills, of the Navy Department's Bureau of Ships.

Don't miss this important broadcast! It will be heard on all NBC stations throughout the nation on Dec. 6 from 1:15 to 1:30 P.M., Eastern War Time.

A Message to Labor

By FRANK KNOX,
Secretary of the Navy

One year ago, when we were so treacherously attacked by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor, American Workers were called upon to increase to the utmost the production of ships and material for the Fleet.

The response of labor was magnificent, and free American labor may well be proud of the production records they established during the year now in our shipyards, aircraft factories, ordnance plants, and other factories.

The Navy Department congratulates the men and women of American labor upon the splendid work done in remarkable job for the armed services. The men in the Fleet are eternally grateful to the soldiers of production

who are furnishing them with these weapons of war on time.

Progress must continue to be made on the production line as well as on the firing line. Existing production records must be broken, and that calls for even greater cooperation between management and labor in American industry. Progressive and intelligent methods must continue to be used in this, the most gigantic war production program of all time. Absenteeism, industrial accidents, and needless waste must be reduced to a minimum. Hours and safety standards in war plants and shipyards can do much to keep the most workers on the job the most days.

Wage Boost For Millions of Women Seen In Order of War Labor Board

Washington, D. C.—The wages of several million women workers may be increased as a result of a general order issued by the War Labor Board, allowing employers to make wage or salary adjustments to equalize the wages of women with those of men for comparable quality and quantity of work without prior board approval.

These adjustments must be reported to the board, but they can not be used to furnish the basis for an increase in price ceilings.

This action of the labor board is similar to the principle of equal pay for equal work adopted by the War Labor Board in the first World War. Today's order follows specific rulings made in recent weeks covering several cases.

If an employer refuses the demands of his women employes for equal pay for comparable work, and they then wish to do so, they may have the dispute certified to the regional office of the board for a ruling. Since equal pay for equal work is now the board's policy, it would rule in favor of the women workers, provided the work they were doing was the same as that performed by male workers.

The order on this ruling, called General Order No. 16, read as follows:

"Adjustments which equalize the wage or salary rates paid to females at rates higher than those paid to males for comparable quality and quantity of work on the same or similar jobs, and adjustments in accordance with this policy which recognize or are based on differences in quality or quantity of work performed, may be made without approval of the National War Labor Board, provided that:

"Such adjustments are reported, when made, to the Division of Review, Analysis and Research of the National War Labor Board together with sufficient information to show that they are in accordance with the policy referred to above;

"Such adjustments shall be subject to the board's ultimate power of review, but any modification or reversal thereof will not be retroactive;

"Such adjustments shall not furnish a basis either to increase price ceilings or, in cases where the work involved or to resist otherwise justified reductions in such price ceilings."

War Secretary Empowered To Adjust Wages of Million Civilian Employes

Washington, D. C.—The War Labor Board delegated to the Secretary of War the power to rule upon all wage and salary adjustments of more than 1,000,000 civilian employes in the United States and Alaska employed by the War Department, the Army Exchange Services and Government-owned, privately-operated facilities of the War Department. Wages and salaries fixed by statute are exempt.

The board issued a general order designated as 5-B, as a further definition of General Order No. 5, which exempts employers of eight or fewer employes from the requirement of getting board approval of pay increases. Number 5-B said that the

CARTRIDGE CO. ORDERED TO END COMPANY UNION

Washington, D. C.—The National War Labor Board ordered the Remington Cartridge Co., East Alton, Ill., to obey an NLRB order disestablishing its Employes' Independent Union Association and until a court order reverses or changes the order, the company should comply with the NLRB decision, said the board.

The company was told to reinstate 19 employes pending a National Labor Relations Board decision on their discharge and William Elliott, who was ordered reinstated by the NLRB. Anticipating an appeal if the decision went against the company, the board said the company must employ the 19 pending the outcome of "any appeal taken."

The company was ordered to recognize AFL affiliates in grievance cases involving their members. An arbitrator will be the final judge. The grievance machinery shall be maintained until one year's notice has been given of a desire to change it.

In the construction field fine actions have also been placed and the organization is now "sound as a time to determine the total number of employes at which the employer puts the adjustment into effect or agrees to it. No employer may make adjustments under this provision for more than a total of eight individuals in the year following Oct. 3, 1942, in the case of wages, or Oct. 27, 1942, in the case of salaries.

The board interpreted General Order No. 5, because of questions raised about the provision that the rate for any job classification shall be fixed "at a level not exceeding that which prevails for similar classifications in the locality."

The board authorized wage and hour division local offices to make final rulings, except in unusual cases.

Charge That Wages Spur Inflation Punctured By Department of Labor

Propagandists who have been saying that workers are rolling in so much money that inflation is threatened were given a stiff jolt in two reports by the Department of Labor.

One disclosed that in mid-September it took earnings of $30 to $35 a week in nearly all large cities of the country for a family of four to live at a bare "maintenance" level.

Such a "maintenance" budget, the Department said, provides for modest housing, "an adequate diet at minimum cost," essential clothing, "entries once a week, "no savings other than life insurance," and no automobile.

In the same month, the average earnings for all manufacturing labor paid was $47.58 a week, or just a little above the maintenance level, the Department declared.

Workers' average weekly pay of far less than that. Non-durable goods plants, which are mostly the non-defense fields, paid an average of only $29.71 a week, or less than the rock-bottom maintenance figure.

In some of the industries, the average fell below $20 a week. This was the basic level in the needle trades and cigar manufacturing, as well as service fields such as hotels and general merchandising.

Other industries in which average earnings were listed as below the maintenance level are lumber and lumber basic products, $23.08; a weekly furniture and finished lumber products, $27.46; textiles and apparel, $24.07; leather and leather products, $25.82; retail trade, $23.41; laundries, $21.15; dyeing and cleaning, $24.49.

Sheet Metal Workers Will Report Large Gains To Annual Convention

President Robert Byron of the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association announced that the organization will open its regular quadrennial convention at the Netherland Plaza Hotel, in Cincinnati, November 14. Several hundred delegates will participate from the United States and Canada.

Outstanding among reports to be delivered to the convention by Byron showing members have given 100 per cent cooperation to the war efforts which organization has played a vital part in the construction of a vast number of military airplanes.

Other reports will disclose impressive increases in membership and extension of union wage through collective bargaining. Particularly encouraging progress has been made by the union in railroad shops being added.

In the construction field fine actions have also been placed and the organization is now "sound as a whistle," Byron explained. The convention, he added, will be on the eve of the fifty-fifth birthday of the union, which was founded in January, 1888.

Veteran officers guide the organization. President Byron, who started as a sheet metal worker in his teens, later became a general organizer and served on the staff of the association for nearly three decades before being elevated to the presidency in 1939 on the death of President John J. Hynes.

Byron has played an active role in the defense program. He is now a member of the Wage Adjustment Board of the Building Construction Industry—a government body which has the important task of stabilizing wages and working conditions on the vast Federal construction program.

Secretary-Treasurer W. H. O'Brien has also been with the organization for the major part of its career. He is now serving in the secretaryship for his twenty-sixth year.

Labor Peace Conferences Start As New Warfare Flares In West With CIO Raids On Kaiser Yards

Metal Trades Unions Form Defense Committee To Ward Off CIO-NLRB Attacks

Washington, D. C. — The AFL Metal Trades Department launched an all-out war against CIO raiding and against interference by the National Labor Relations Board with established trade union practices.

At a special conference here called by President John P. Frey, representatives of the Metal Trades Unions established a Defense Committee to "protect their interests and their rights from contrary decisions by the National Labor Relations Board and the unjustified and unpatriotic raiding now being carried on by the CIO against AFL organizations."

The affiliated unions also decided to raise a defense fund to carry on their campaign to combat the combined efforts of the CIO and the NLRB to wreck their organizations in the shipbuilding industry on the West Coast.

These extraordinary measures were precipitated by the NLRB decision to issue a complaint against three West Coast shipyards owned and operated by Henry J. Kaiser. These shipyards are under union-shop agreement with AFL metal trades and building trades unions, yet the board has the gall to charge the management with unfair labor practices.

The Defense Committee was empowered to take such action as it deems necessary to carry out its objectives. Members of the committee named at the meeting include: Harvey W. Brown, president of the International Association of Machinists; Robert Byron, president of the Sheet Metal Workers Union; George Masterton, president of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters; Ed J. Brown, president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Charles A. McGowan, vice president of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, and William Gallagher, of the Painters and Decorators. Mr. Gallagher will represent several building trades unions on the committee.

In a statement issued after the conference, Mr. Frey said:

"The action of the bewildered National Labor Relations Board in challenging the agreements which the A. F. of L. has with three Kaiser shipbuilding plants is indefensible. Representatives of the United States Government, of the A. F. of L. and of the Pacific Coast shipbuilding industry spent tireless months to bring about the stabilization under which it has been operating, and under which miracles of production have been accomplished. The production of the Kaiser plants under this stabilization agreement has excited the admiration of the world. Nothing like thing has given more alarm to Hitler. Under this agreement the frequent disruptions and disorder which had marked the industry were wholly eliminated. Peace, thorough-going cooperation between management and union labor, and above all, an unexcelled turning out of ships, have followed.

"A Government agency, now moving in direct opposition to the will of other Government agencies, would throw the shipbuilding industry into a seething caldron of discontent. It would open up a Pandora's box which is not confined to the three plants immediately involved. The warfare will be stimulated and it will spread over the entire industry, the Atlantic as well as the Pacific Coast.

"That what is behind the Board's action? What disruptive forces are at work? Make no mistake about it, they exist and they will soon become apparent. This is not simply a case of bungling by a Government agency. It assumes an air that might turn out to be. It is but the beginning of a deliberate move to sabotage one of our most vital industries at the very height of the war."

AFL Leader Named Special Assistant To War Production Board Head

Washington, D. C.—Appointment of the first of a number of labor men in key or special assistants to divisional directors was announced by the War Production Board.

The first appointee is Matthew J. Burns, who becomes a special assistant to A. G. Wakeman, chief of the Labor Division of the Office of Production Management, since April, 1941.

It will be Mr. Burns' duty to keep the division director informed as to labor's advice on matters within the jurisdiction of the division. He will likewise be responsible for working out any problems arising in the division.

Mr. Wakeman said that he expects to utilize Mr. Burns frequently on special assignments in making analyses and recommendations as to production programs in terms of manpower requirements. Mr. Burns is authorized to call in, through the Labor Production Division, such labor representatives as he may need to advise him on specific problems affecting labor and production in the shipbuilding industry.

"Having had long acquaintance with Mr. Burns as a representative of the International Union of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers, I welcome his appointment as an assistant," Mr. Wakeman said.

"In accordance with established procedure, his name was suggested by the Director of the Labor Production Division, following consultation with President Green of the AFL."

No-Strike Pledges Should End At Close of the War, Davis Urges

New York City.—Describing the right to strike as "a last resort," the no-strike pledges made by labor at the outbreak of war "should not be continued after the war."

"Speaking only for myself, I do not regard the present powers of the NWLB as suitable for determining labor disputes in times of peace. The foundation upon which the NWLB stands is erected in the no-strike pledge, and it will be necessary, in my judgment, to abandon the structure; permit the freedom of a new structure on the basis of a new agreement."

Dr. William Green of the AFL praised the board for its work and expressed confidence in its integrity, despite labor disagreements in certain cases.

BOSTON SYMPHONY SIGNS TRADE UNION AGREEMENT

Boston, Mass. — The Boston Symphony, which for several years has been the only non-commercial international prominence in the United States, has finally signed a contract with the American Federation of Musicians (AFL).

CLAY SEWER PIPE LABOR GRANTED PAID VACATIONS

Washington, D. C.—The National War Labor Board granted vacations with pay to 4,000 employes of 16 manufacturers of clay sewer pipe and tile in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Indiana, but withholding a ruling on wage increases pending further inquiry. The 16 companies make nearly 80 per cent of the sewer pipe manufactured east of the Mississippi River and are under contract with the United Brick and Clay Workers of America, American Federation of Labor.

KENTUCKY UNIONS TOP WAR RELIEF CAMPAIGN

New York City—AFL unions in Jefferson County and Lexington, Ky., have exceeded their quota of contributions for war relief, R. J. Martin, director of the Labor Division of that city's war relief, reported to Mayor Wcll, president of United Nations Relief.

Working in official cooperation with the local Community War Chests for the first time, labor in Louisville and Lexington has already contributed $140,000 from individual worker contributions, union treasuries, scrap proceeds, and special projects, and more coming in, Mr. Martin said.

Peace Plans Embarrassed By Raiding Tactics As Parleys Open

Washington, D. C.—Peace conferences between committees representing the American Federation of Labor and the CIO got under way at the Willard Hotel here after a three-year lapse.

No immediate indication of results was forthcoming as the conferees settled themselves to the task of finding a way to bring about a formula for a reunited labor movement in America.

(Note to Editors: This story was written as the conferences began. Bulletins will be mailed immediately if any important developments occur before December 1.)

The members of the AFL Committee who took their places at the conference table were Vice Presidents Harry C. Bates, Daniel J. Tobin and William L. Hutcheson. Opposite them sat the CIO representatives—Philip Murray, R. J. Thomas and Julius Emspak.

While both AFL and CIO representatives indicated a strong disposition to seek out a settlement in the shortest possible time, their job was seriously embarrassed by CIO raiding in the field which has aroused the anger of a large proportion of the AFL membership.

Outstanding among these attempted raids was the effort of the CIO to muscle into the Henry J. Kaiser shipyards on the West Coast with the aid of the National Labor Relations Board. These yards are under closed shop contract with AFL unions but this circumstance did not deter CIO organizers from their raiding tactics.

In this connection, it was recalled that the recent AFL convention in Toronto unanimously adopted a resolution calling for an immediate armistice and a ban on inter-union raiding as an important first step toward attaining labor peace.

The convention declared that such an armistice would eliminate bitterness of feeling and help to bring hostilities to an end.

Reports were current that the CIO would propose that there be an immediate merger of all AFL and CIO unions into a single organization and that jurisdictional conflicts be zoned out later. A similar proposal was made by the CIO in 1939 and was rejected by the AFL, whereupon the CIO itself abandoned it.

The AFL committee then—and it has not changed since—was that such a merger would not end the conflict but merely aggravate it. Real peace and unity can be achieved, in the opinion of AFL leaders, only by settlement of all jurisdictional conflicts and that the entire CIO membership is readmitted.

ANY BONDS TODAY?

Washington, D. C.—With the theme song changed from defense to victory, Uncle Sam opened the biggest war financing campaign in world history.

To meet the steadily increasing costs of war the Treasury will borrow $9,000,000,000 during December, getting a large portion of it from issuance of three new-type Treasury securities which Secretary Morgenthau termed "adapted for every type of investor."

The new Victory securities, two bonds and one certificate, are now on sale and will remain open to purchasers for many weeks, the Treasury said. The bonds range from $500 to $100,000 in denominations and the certificates from $1,000 to $100,000.

In addition to the three new securities, the $9,000,000,000 will be raised from sale of War bonds, in which phase labor will make its greatest contribution.

DRAFT OF LABOR OPPOSED BY SOUTHERN AFL UNIONS

Atlanta, Ga. — If labor is drafted, capital must be drafted too, representatives of southern unions of the AFL voted here resolved at a special conference called by George Googe, of southern AFL representative. The resolution opposed conscription of labor but stated that if it should become necessary, "men all industries and places in business of whatever nature which seem such conscripted labor might be assigned to work, shall likewise be taken over by the government and operated under the provisions of the government," so that "no forced labor shall be used by any private employer for private gain or profit."

The delegates also demanded greater labor representation on rationing and manpower boards, and resolved to intensify their campaign for more general participation in purchase of war bonds through the payroll allotment plan.